Sac State actors measure *Water by the Spoonful*

Elliott and Yasmin live in one world where they cope with their Aunt Ginny’s death, Elliott tries to readjust to civilian life after serving in Iraq, and Yasmin struggles with divorce and her role as Elliott’s emotional support.

Orangutan, Chutes&Ladders and Fountainhead are recovering drug addicts who live in another world, trying to maintain their sobriety through an online chat room.

And Odessa, aka HaikuMom, straddles the narrow line between the two worlds, trying to help the addicts as a way to make up for failing her children.

Sacramento State presents *Water by the Spoonful*, Quiara Alegria Hudes’ Pulitzer Prize-winning drama, at Playwrights’ Theatre. Directed by Professor Roberto Pomo, the play has performances at 8 p.m. Nov. 12-15, 21 and 22; 6:30 p.m. Nov. 19 and 20; and 2 p.m. Nov. 16 and 23.

“I assigned the play for my script analysis class two years ago and fell in love with it,” Pomo says. “It’s timely and, even though the individuals are going through a painful journey, it still has a very positive look at their personal lives.”

An Iraq War veteran, Elliott struggles with ghosts from the conflict – and from a more distant past when his mother was an addict.

Normally a cheerful person who likes to joke around, Elliott is having trouble dealing with his hardships. “He’s been through a lot of pain, but it’s all internalized,” says Antonio Perez de la Cruz, who portrays Elliott. “It’s hard for him to face his emotions and the difficulties he’s had in life.”

Jezabel Olivares plays Elliott’s cousin Yasmin, a free spirit and adjunct music professor who has her own troubles. “She’s like Elliott’s rock,” Olivares says. “We both loved Aunt Ginny, but he’s going through a really hard time so, despite her own difficulties, Yasmin is still trying to be strong for her family.”

And Odessa, played by Yesenia Lopez, presides over the chat room for recovering addicts as a way to make amends for past transgressions. “I’ve had issues with my son, and because of that, I no longer have a connection with him,” Lopez says. “He’s no longer a part of my life where I can say, ‘He’s my son.’”

The actors add that audience members are in for an experience.

“If they want to have an intense, emotional roller-coaster ride, they have to come check this out,” de la Cruz says.

“It’s also beautifully written,” Olivares says. “It’s real – the way they communicate, the way they’re coping, the way they’re recovering. They help each other out. It’s a beautiful thing to see.”
Tickets for the 6:30 p.m. performances are $8 general, $5 for children under 12. All other performances are $12 general, $10 students and seniors, and $8 children. Tickets are available at the University Ticket Office, (916) 278-4323 or www.csus.edu/hornettickets.

For more information, visit www.csus.edu/dram or call (916) 278-6368. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. – Craig Koscho